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A D V I C E
TO THE
C L E R G Y

OF EVERY
DENOMINATION AND DEGREE:

WITH
THE EVULGATION
OF THE
RESOLUTIONS OF THE LATE CONGRESS
HELD IN GERMANY,

For the Purpose of abolishing CHRISTIANITY
throughout Europe.

Supposed to be written by the Author of The PATRIAD.

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A D V I C E
TO THE
C L E R G Y.

HOW just soever may be the complaints of oppression in the several exhausted European monarchies; the philosophers of the present age congratulate each other, on the supreme felicity of being called into existence in times so eminently distinguished for the triumph

umph of human reason over the absurdities of revelation; and, to demonstrate the equal distribution of good and evil in every age and in every country, they have proved, beyond all doubt, that the burthens by which mankind are now oppressed, are sufficiently counterpoized by the glorious liberty of descanting on the superstitious credulity of our forefathers.

To overturn a religion firmly established, and sanctified by the blood of many martyrs, and the opinions of many wise and good men,

men, is a matter of extreme difficulty, and not to be effected by a *coup de main*. No: it will require infinite precaution, circumspection, and design. Nevertheless, I flatter myself the case is not desperate, and that I shall be able to point out the means by which this great work may be happily accomplished. It is principally from the illumined understanding of the clergy of the church of England, that success in this arduous attempt is to be expected; for though divines, in this degenerate age, may have lost some part of their pristine authority, they

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nevertheless retain a considerable degree of influence on the minds of that pious few who compose their thin, their select, congregations: and, as the sublimity and perfect freedom of their ideas, their knowledge of speculative philosophy, and their acquaintance with modern ratiocination, will depend on their education, I shall take up my young pupil at a very early period of his career, and conduct him gradually to the summit of ecclesiastical dignity.

CHAP.

THE CLERGY.

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CHAPTER I.

ADVICE TO PARENTS.

THAT it is your duty to provide for your children in the best manner you are able, is universally acknowledged; and mankind are equally unanimous in opinion, that your choice of the several professions should be determined by the genius of each individual child, so that they may be severally destined to the art or science for which nature seems to have designed them. If you happen to have

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any acquaintance with a female intimate of the lord chancellor, or with the housekeeper of a bishop, you will probably determine to make one of your sons a parson ; for without some such prospect of preferment, no man in his senses would breed a lad to the church. If you have no such interest, he will remain a curate to the end of his life. It were much wiser to make a taylor of him.

Ignorant people may suppose, that genius and abilities are indispensibly requisite in a student of divinity.

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The frequent examples of men of very inferior talents rising to the pinnacle of preferment, prove the fallacy of this supposition. In fact, divinity is no science at all; if it were, it would certainly be studied and taught at our universities: it is not a science, but an art, which young divines never think of till after they are ordained, and it is then acquired without either talents or application. How irrational, therefore, to devote a boy of shining abilities to a profession which requires neither genius nor study. Observe your children with attention. If

there be among them one more stupid than the rest, be that the lad intended for the church. In any other profession, his want of understanding might prevent his fortune; in this it will be of no disadvantage. If he learns his letters with difficulty; if he stammers through his Primer, and finally reads a chapter in the Bible with difficulty, hesitation, and the tone of a Quaker's sermon or of a Methodist shoemaker, so much the better. Such sort of reading will best suit the old ladies that are to compose his congregation on week-days, when he becomes

comes a curate, and on Sundays, the young and polite part of his audience will be too busily employed to give any attention to the service: elocution, therefore, natural or acquired, is a talent that would be totally useless.

Our embryo divine hath, under the tuition of his spectacled dame, now attained his *ne plus ultra*, as to the English language. I say his *ne plus ultra*; for from this moment the study of Latin and Greek will engross all his attention, Whatsoever progress he has now made in
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the art of reading English is all the progress he will ever make; for the learned gentlemen, who will henceforward superintend his education, abound too much in ancient literature to waste their time in the culture of the vulgar tongue. Your son is now eight or ten years old; it is therefore time to think of sending him to a grammar-school; but, before you positively determine to breed him to the church, there are other considerations of no less importance than his want of capacity and natural aversion to his book, and without which I would not be

responsible for his success in that line. I could wish that by this time he should have discovered some attachment to horses and dogs; that he should have amused himself with putting squibs and crackers under the maids petticoats, and gunpowder in the bowl of an old woman's tobacco-pipe: in short, that he should discover unequivocal pretensions to the appellation of a *Pickle*. With this character he will enter the grammar-school to very great advantage. His ignorance will be ascribed to his volatility, and he will be considered by his masters

masters as an arch young dog capable of doing great things, if he would but apply.

The next question is, whether you should send your son to a private or to a publick school?—This important question hath been frequently agitated by men of distinguished abilities; but the advantages and disadvantages of each are so equally poized, that the matter remains still as doubtful as ever; I mean with regard to education in general: as to those children that are intended for the church, morals being

being out of the question, you ought doubtless to prefer a publick school. The reason is obvious. In a publick school your young hopeful will be certain to meet with lads of his own kidney ; young bucks of family and fortune, who will most readily instruct him in those fashionable vices which necessarily lead to preferment.

There are in this kingdom four publick schools peculiarly adapted to the education of a divine : these are Westminster, Eton, Winchester, and the Charter-house. Doubtless

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you would be glad to have your boy upon one of these foundations ; but unless your son were the bastard of a nobleman, or that he has a handsome sister whom you are willing to sacrifice, it will be attended with great difficulty. If you have lived entirely in the country, probably you may not easily be persuaded to sacrifice one child for the benefit of another ; but your friends in town will soon convince you, that these are antiquated scruples, very ill adapted to the refined manners of the present age. Whatever might be the intention of the pious founders

ders of these seminaries, our present race of *primates*, who have the nomination of poor scholars, direct this power to very useful purposes. I remember a governor of the Charter-house who had three or four of his bastards at the same time on the foundation at that school. But if it so happens that a governor has no bastards to provide for, he very wisely nominates the sons of the freemen of his borough, and by that means strengthens his parliamentary interest: so that unless you chuse that your daughter should go into keeping, or that you are related to
a lady

a lady already in that situation, or that you have a vote for a member of parliament, you will find it very difficult to get your boy on the foundation at any of the publick schools. I have indeed known some people succeed through the influence of a *valet de chambre*, or of a good old housekeeper; but then these were faithful domesticks who were peculiarly useful in the capacity of pimp and bawd.

CHAPTER II.

ADVICE TO A SCHOOL-BOY.

YOUR parents having succeeded, no matter by what means, in placing you on the foundation at one of the publick schools above-mentioned, you will be very civilly treated, during the first week, by the rest of your school-fellows. But these halcyon days will soon be over. You are then to enter upon the honourable occupation of fag to an upper boy, whom you are to obey with implicit subserviency. You

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are to sweep his chamber, boil his kettle, toast his bread, toast his cheese, black his shoes, fill his water-bottle, and empty his chamber-pot. This is not all: whenever he chuses to carouse with his companions, you are to watch on the stair-case in order to give notice of the master's approach, even till two or three o'clock in the morning. If you should happen to fall a-sleep, you may depend upon a sound drubbing; but that is of no consequence, as you will revenge it upon your own fag, after you have been a few years in the school.

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If, at this tender age, perceiving in your nature any thing like the spirit of an Englishman, you should feel hurt at this species of slavery, you must consider it as a political necessity in the present constitution of things; that the natal independant spirit of an Englishman is frequently troublesome to ministers of state, and that this species of scholastic despotism is the most effectual method of subduing that spirit. If you are a nobleman's bastard, or the son of a gentleman, you will probably, at first, be a little shocked at the frequency of that most ignomi-

nious of all punishments called flogging. You will naturally suppose the poor boys, who are thus unmercifully chastised, to have been guilty of some dreadful crime, and the person, who inflicts the punishment, to be the beadle of the parish or a public executioner. But you will soon learn, that the crime was a false concord in the lad's exercise, and that the judge and executioner is no less a personage than the master himself. You condemn the cruelty and injustice of such severity, because you are yet unacquainted with the world. If you should ever become a great man,

man, and send your children, bastards or legitimate, to a publick school, you will be too much engaged in business of more importance, to trouble yourself about the education of your brats. You send them to school to be out of the way, and that is all you will care for.

As to this flogging, you will see and probably feel, so much of it, that it is necessary you should be well acquainted with the cause of its institution, and the benefit thence arising to society. If you should ever chance to dip into the History

of England, you will find that we are naturally a spirited untractable race of beings, exceedingly tenacious of our liberty, and much inclined to wrangle with our superiors. This national spirit is a troublesome ingredient in our constitution. Now government wisely endeavours, by means of school-masters, to strangle this Hercules in the cradle: and indeed what other means could be contrived to answer this purpose so effectually as the present system of servility, and ignominious punishment, which obtains in publick schools? A lad of family, who in
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the capacity of fag, from the age of ten to fourteen, has performed the most servile offices for his equal, or perhaps his inferior in point of birth; who has been kicked about by every tyrant in the forms above him, and unmercifully, wantonly, and disgracefully punished by the most inhuman of all tyrants, his master; such a lad, I say, having lost all sense of shame, all idea of freedom, and all sensibility of his dignity as a rational being, enters the great stage of life properly broke and disciplined to the purposes of administration.

A little reflexion on this subject will convince you, how necessary this sort of early education is towards the support of government, and the maintenance of due subordination both in church and state; for, without this timely subjugation, this early habit of servility, this menial servitude, this patient submission to the capricious cruelty of a lawless, an unfeeling tyrant, young lords and members of parliament might spurn the yoke of a minister as beneath their dignity; the inferior clergy might presume to reason with a bishop, and thus the ne-

cessary subordination both in church and state would be entirely destroyed. Ministers of state cannot work without tools, and a bishoprick would hardly be worth acceptance, were it not for the pleasure of tyrannising over the inferior clergy. Thus you perceive how necessary, to a well regulated government, it is, that young minds should grow familiar with servitude, that they should be inured to bodily pain, and become totally insensible to every species of indignity.

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But this is not all. What I have already written comprehends only a part of the wise plan of publick education. Whilst you continued at your English school, your good old dame made you read in the Bible, taught you the catechism and your prayers. Hence you might suppose, that religion was a necessary part of education. But now that you are removed to a great school, you find that religion is a thing beneath the attention of a Latin scholar; for, if religion were deemed a matter of importance, some attention would certainly be paid to it. I mean the
Christian

Christian religion, with which at a Latin school, you will have no concern: that of the Greeks and Romans will constitute a considerable part of your present studies. Ovid's Metamorphoses is now your Gospel, and the idle reveries of Christianity must give way to the rational, the moral, the divine system of heathen mythology. On this system you cannot bestow too much attention, because in this knowledge consists a principal part of the learning of a classical scholar. The intrigues of Jupiter will amuse and instruct you at the same time. For example:
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from the story of his making love in a shower of gold, you learn that no chastity is proof against money; from his rape of Europa in the form of a bull, you are taught, that a young lady may be carried to Scotland without her consent; and from his amour with Leda in the disguise of a swan you will naturally conclude, that a masquerade is a laudable and successful amusement. These early impressions will be of infinite service to you through life, especially if you should take holy orders; for in that case, much of your success with the ladies will depend on disimulation.

Simulation. These are advantages which you can never expect to reap from a knowledge of the Christian religion, which promises nothing more than to render you virtuous and honest: now these are so far from being desirable acquirements, that they would prove an insuperable bar to your promotion. For this reason Christianity is very wisely neglected in all our publick schools. /n/

You are now arrived at that joyful period when you cease to be a *fag*. Your genius is no longer cramped by servitude. You now command

a) true genuine Wit, well the
worthy the pen of a Dean of
St. Patrick's Dublin viz: a Swift.

the obedience of more than half the school, and in order to establish your authority at once, let me advise you to command your sag to perform some impossibility, and then to knock him down for disobedience. You may honour him with two or three kicks as he lies on the ground. You know, by experience, that he dares not complain. Such spirited conduct will render you feared and respected, and by being frequently exercised, will effectually stifle those seeds of humanity which, in your future commerce with the world, might be very troublesome ; therefore the
sooner

sooner you get rid of them the better. But the power of fagging, kicking, and cuffing, the underlings by no means limits your authority. All their possessions are by immemorial custom your own property. If you break or lose a shoe buckle, a knife, an inkhorn, or any other utensil, take one without scruple from any under boy, and make it your own. He possibly may be flogged for wanting it; but that is no concern of your's. You know that even in the moment of execution, he dares not speak truth, and that if he did, the master would give no credit

to his assertion. Remember always, that, whilst you were a fag, you were constantly pillaged and *lick'd* and *damned*, and in every respect maltreated by your superiors. Surely nothing can be more just than that you should revenge yourself on those below you, now that it is in your power. To treat the younglings with humanity were a deviation from the common law of the school, which, like the common law of the land, must not be violated or infringed. If your natural good nature or humanity should ever plead in behalf of helpless innocence, you would do well to
recollect

recollect, that the tyrannical behaviour of the upper boys is well known to the masters and governors of the school, and that if it were a thing improper to be continued, men of learning, and personages of rank and power would take care to have it abolished. Besides, when you become acquainted with the general history of mankind, you will discover, that in despotick governments, every subject is a tyrant in proportion to his power, and that the weak are oppressed in proportion to their imbecillity. Hence it will appear, that the tyranny of the upper boys

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is a natural consequence of the arbitrary constitution of publick schools, where the legislative, judicial, and executive power is vested in the master.

And now, my young friend, I will suppose you advanced to the dignity of a monitor, and seated on the highest form. Your power in this situation is great indeed. In one year more you will go off to the university. In your own idea, you are no longer a school boy, and were it not for the long lank hair on your shoulders, you might consider yourself a fine gentleman or a buck which forever

ever you chuse to affect. As to your hair, you must not on any account suffer it to be cut; because, as often as you *tib out*, it must be tied in a cue; for, though your friseur will supply you with a false one, yet a certain length of hair is necessary to effect the union. But of *tibbing out*, I shall speak anon. Mean while, let me remind you, that the institutes of the school invest you with the power of imposing any task you think proper on any of your inferiors, and of *shewing them up* for punishment whensoever they dare to offend you, dispute your authority, or disobey

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your commands. A general assertion that the culprit deserves punishment, without any proof of his guilt, is quite sufficient. His breeches are let down, and the master proceeds to flagellation without further enquiry. It would be impossible for the sovereign of such a community to examine minutely into the merits of trivial causes; he rationally presumes that you are satisfied of the boy's guilt, and therefore nothing can be more just and equitable than that he should be punished without further examination. ~~Thus~~

~~the master proceeds to flagellation without further enquiry. Thus~~

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Thus elevated, you must never forget that the under boys are your slaves, and that you have an indisputable right to beat them for your amusement as often as you are in that humour : and, that these trembling insects may instantly obey you, I advise you always to enforce your commands with an oath. This custom of swearing will give you a manly air, and will gradually habituate you to that buckish dialect so essential to your character on your first appearance in the great world : it will also inform your acquaintance, that you were not educated

at a paltry country school, where the polite accomplishment of swearing is not understood.

Hitherto I have mentioned only the least important part of your duty as a monitor. What follows concerns you much more essentially. You now are of an age to think and act on the authority of your own reason and judgement. Your parents, after each vacation, furnish you with more money, and they certainly mean that you should spend it. Part of their intention may be fulfilled by indulging yourself and your comrades now and then with a roast fowl and
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a few bottles of wine after the strip-
lings are all in bed. But you must
not forget to post a couple of your
fags at the top of the staircase to
prevent surprize. These fags, though
in the depth of winter, must stand
in their shirts, that, after giving the
alarm, they may slip immediately in-
to bed. Your dishes, plates, bot-
tles and glass, you will hide under
the bed, clap on your night-cap,
cover yourself with the quilt, fall a
snoring, and leave the rest to fate.
The master will smell your roast fowl.
No matter : he remembers the days
of his youth and retires. You then

resume your conviviality without further apprehensions of interruption. you may now proceed to toast your girls, finish your wine, and retire to rest as completely drunk as if you had spent your evening in any tavern in London.

But drinking is by no means the only accomplishment of a young gentleman. It is now high time to turn your thoughts to gallantry. The first objects of your attention in this way will be the maid servants; and the surest method of cultivating an intimacy with these, is to sham sick.

sick. They will administer your gruel and warm your bed. Yet this is a species of gallantry of which you will soon grow weary : besides it is necessary that a young gentleman of your age should become acquainted with the ways of the town. This, doubtless, was the intention of your parents in filling your purse with guineas ; well knowing that it is impossible to spend them within bounds. Thus stimulated and encouraged, if you have any spunk in you, you will study assiduously the art of *tibbing out*. Much information on this head might have been acquired from
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the lads that went off last year ; but lest you should have been too negligent to avail yourself of such information, I will direct you how to proceed.

The first thing you are to think of is how to scale the high wall that seems to present an insuperable barrier to your excursion. The best way of surmounting this difficulty is to drive into the wall a few large nails at proper distances, so as to form an invincible step-ladder. The upper nails are to be managed by standing on the shoulders of the tallest boy in the school,

school, if you cannot procure a ladder for the purpose. This being accomplished, your next difficulty is to take out one of the iron bars of the window. This bar, for greater security, is fastened down, not with a nail, but with an iron screw. Now, a certain instrument, called a screw-driver, with which I suppose you to be provided, will remove this obstacle with the greatest facility. But the removal of these impediments is not all. Much art, circumspection, and stratagem are still essentially requisite. To prevent all suspicion of your design, and in order to fortify yourself

yourself for a nocturnal revel by a few hours previous repose, you must retire into your chamber with your fag, at the usual hour. Having first equipped yourself for the purpose, you lie down together in the bed, so as to appear fast asleep in case you should be visited. When the usual hour of visitation is past, you make your fag quit his pillow and sit in a chair by your bed-side, with positive orders to awake you when the clock strikes one. You then drop down from the window, scale the wall, and make the best of your way to Covent-Garden.

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By frequent excursions of this kind you will obtain a knowledge, if not of man, at least of womankind, particularly of that amiable class of females that inhabit Drury-lane and its environs. Possibly you may run some small risk of being murdered in the midst of your pleasures; but to a lad of spirit this is a trifling consideration. Besides the pleasure and glory of relating your perilous adventures to your future acquaintance at the university, will be a sufficient equivalent for any danger to which you may have been exposed.

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If, at any time, you should happen to run short of cash, your taylor is the best man to apply to: he knows his own interest too well to refuse a young gentleman the loan of a few guineas. Your parents will certainly discharge the debt and applaud your spirit; for, though they may pretend to be displeased with your extravagance, they are not ignorant of your obligation, as an upper boy, to change your silver shoe-buckles as often as the Prince thinks fit to launch a new pair: they know also, that a lad of taste may very possibly cut a dozen pair of shoes

shoes *per annum* to pieces, by endeavouring to prune them to the fashion of the day ; and, that your surgeon's bill, as also those of the poulterer and fruit-woman, being debts of honour, must necessarily be discharged.

By a proper attention to the above advice, you will be tolerably qualified to commence student of divinity at either university : nevertheless, this preparatory part of your education will be incomplete, if, in your frequent journeys into the country at each vacation, you have neglected to learn the art of driving
a stage,

a stage, and of conversing, in their own language, with coachmen and grooms. This knowledge can only be acquired by setting on the box, and bribing the coachman with an extraordinary shilling and a dram as often as he chuses to stop; but you must not neglect to pledge him, whether in brandy, rum, or gin, lest he should deem you for a milk-sop undeserving his instructions.

CHAPTER III.

ADVICE TO A STUDENT OF DIVINITY.

YOU are now become a member of one of the most respectable universities in the world, Oxford or Cambridge. Habited in your gown and square cap, you immediately feel your consequence, and look down with contempt on the ignorance of the rest of mankind. You are in your eighteenth year. Seven years you have spent in constant study at a grammar-school. You have acquired a little knowledge of two

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dead languages, without the least smattering of any science whatsoever.

You are ignorant even of common arithmetick, and you write so miserable a hand that nobody but your school-master can read it. Nothing can be so genteel as to write an illegible hand; and, as to vulgar arithmetick, it can be useful only to a shop-keeper.

The sage founders, governors, and masters of our great schools, all men of learning, penetration, and judgement, have ever been convinced, that a competent knowledge

ledge of Greek and Latin, together with the mechanism of ancient versification, is the *ne plus ultra* of human erudition; therefore, the cultivation of what is commonly called science, would be a mere waste of time. If, on your leaving school, you should entertain a doubt concerning this matter, a short residence at Oxford will convince you, that it is not only the opinion of school-masters, but of all the learned heads of that university. It is true, you will there find professors of every science; but these professorships are all sinécures. If you have any

ambition to distinguish yourself in this great seminary, you must renew your familiarity with your old acquaintance Homer, Virgil, and Horace, and these are all the books you will want.

Possibly you did not imagine, that from these authors were to be learnt all the knowledge necessary for a Christian divine; but you will now be convinced, that they not only teach divinity, but law and physick. Students of every denomination apply only to classical learning, I mean those who are weak
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enough to apply at all. Choice spirits have a better method of spending their time. A book-worm is a despicable character every where, and particularly at Oxford or Cambridge. I advise you therefore carefully to guard against this imputation. Never let it be supposed that you make your own exercises; because that will imply your inability to pay a servitor, whose subsistence depends on the laudable indolence of his superiors.

Your character in the university will, in a great measure, depend on

the choice of your companions. Sober and studious men are, on every account, to be avoided: first, because they are poor, and secondly, because men would suspect you to be of the same dull kidney. But above all things avoid the imputation of being intended for the church; and, in order to remove any suspicion of this nature, you must take every opportunity of ridiculing the Christian religion and of sporting a blasphemous witticism as often as you can. Libidinous allusions and now and then a little plain bawdery will establish your reputation

reputation, particularly if you can attain the habit of swearing like a gentleman. Probably you may object to the study of an art (the art of swearing) which in future, as a clergyman, can be of no use to you. You are mistaken: the 'squire of your parish will look upon this accomplishment as so considerable an addition to your sacerdotal character, that it may possibly be a means of procuring you the tuition of his son.

Being now settled in your college, properly introduced and familiarised with a set of jovial fellows, it is

time to think of laying in a few dozens of wine; for you must give suppers in your turn, and it will be expected that you never suffer your friends to depart until they are at least half seas over. Thus elevated, probably one of them will propose a rou. By all means second the motion; for though you are ignorant of the meaning of this word, you may be assured, from the wisdom of your companions, that it is something very rational and clever: and indeed so you will find it; for what can be more rational and more witty, than to break open
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the door of a poor, ignorant, freshman; to enter his chamber whooping and hallowing; to pull off the bed-clothes, throw his breeches out of the window, light his candles, drink his wine, break his chairs, and baptize him with the contents of his chamber-pot; thence to sally forth in quest of new adventures equally heroic and entertaining? These are glorious exploits, and so replete with genuine wit and humour, that gentlemen who have had an university education recollect and recount them with infinite satisfaction to the end of their lives.

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As the universities were founded chiefly for the education of divines, you probably imagined that, in these seminaries, divinity, as a principal science, is regularly taught by learned and holy professors. I have already told you, that professorships are sinecures, and I now inform you, that attending lectures of any kind is a *bore*. Before your arrival at the university, you may also have expected to obtain some instruction in elocution, particularly in the art of reading your native language, with which you are totally unacquainted, and which seems so necessary to a clergyman.

clergyman. In this conjecture you are equally mistaken. At Oxford all your dependence is on Homer, Virgil, Horace, &c. and at Cambridge, on Euclid; the last of which will be of infinite utility in your future composition of sermons; for what argument can more evidently demonstrate the truth of the Gospel, than that which proves the square of the hypotenuse to be equal to the sum of the squares of the base and perpendicular. Euclid, together with the Greek and Latin poets, are evidently the best commentators on the holy scriptures.

I speak

I speak now only of the ancients, and these are sufficient for your present lucubrations. After a few years residence you may possibly obtain a fellowship: you will then be permitted to study modern commentators, such as Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Bolingbroke, Lord Rochester, Chubb, Tristram Shandy, Voltaire, and Cleland's Woman of Pleasure. A careful perusal of these divine authors will give effectual stability to your faith and moral character.

It cannot however be expected, that a student in divinity should de-

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vote all his time to the severe study of these authors: neither will parties of pleasure by land and by water, supping in taverns, nor intrigues with Oxford or Cambridge misses, be sufficient to occupy all his leisure. You must therefore subscribe to two or three circulating libraries: these will furnish you with an inexhaustible fund of rational entertainment; and, by the grammatical accuracy and elegance of style which distinguish our modern romances, will polish your pulpit language to the highest degree of purity and precision.

If,

If, by some extraordinary accident, you should have acquired a smattering of history or philosophy, I would advise you, as you value your reputation, never to touch on those subjects when you are in company with other fellows, either in the common room or elsewhere. Serious conversation is the bane of festivity. Philosophical discourse is totally out of its element in either of the universities. But above all things avoid religion, unless to shew your talent for wit and ridicule. If you possess this talent in an eminent degree, you cannot too often

often introduce religion into your conversation, as you will by that means essentially promote *the great work*. What is meant by *the great work*, I shall tell you; but not until you are initiated into the profound mystery of priesthood, and obtain the divine mission and permission to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The most disagreeable duty of a student at the university is the attendance at early prayers. This however you may frequently skulk, under pretence of indisposition:

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besides the punishment, in case of delinquency, falls not upon yourself. A servitor performs the imposition, and your father pays for it. Nevertheless I would not have you neglect these *matins* entirely. They were instituted with a very pious intention, and they certainly answer the purpose for which they were ordained. They are of popish origin, and therefore entitled to our veneration. But they are peculiarly useful in satiating students in divinity with divine worship, and thereby preventing that inordinate passion for acts of supererogation

gation, with which young minds are apt to be contaminated, and which the church does not require. Forcing a man to pray, is doubtless the most effectual method to make him not pray at all, and that were infinitely better than that he should pray too much. You see then, that the reason for obliging you to pray so frequently, is to make you heartily sick of devotion, and thus to render you a rational divine and an efficacious instrument in promoting *the great work*. But that your attendance at early prayers may be no waste of time, you may take a novel

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in your hand : it will be easily concealed under your surplice.

You have now spent two or three years at the university, and you begin to find that the several occupations and amusements are insufficient to fill all your leisure hours. If you can afford it, I would advise you to keep a good hunter at livery; if not, you may learn to scrape on the violin, or to whistle on the German flute. Musick is an admirable succedaneum for study; besides it will introduce you to the acquaintance of those eminent professors, male and female, that honour the universities with their

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presence

presence at publick times. Musick, Doctor Hayes will tell you, requires more application than any other science; that the practise alone, theory totally out of the question, demands, at least, five or six hours a day; a portion of time sufficient to lift a common genius to the pinnacle of distinction in law, physick, or divinity. But you will meet your reward in the plaudits of your master and fellow students, who will listen with envious rapture to your melting strains. Indeed the extraneous band of professors may possibly when amongst themselves presume to call you a miserable scraper or whistler,

lamenting the necessity of mixing with gentlemen performers; nevertheless this scraping, or whistling, vile as it is, may be productive of singular honours. It will entitle you to shake hands with a Cramer, a Fisher, a Crofdel; and, what is of much more importance, will introduce you to a Mara and many other celebrated females of capacity, and extensive philanthropy, who will abundantly repay you for the drudgery of musical application.

It being now universally known that you are a great musician, you will be elected steward of the concert;

cert ; in consequence of which you will converse familiarly with the female performer, who will not fail to give you consequence with the audience by her gracious smiles and the significant glances of her eye. In the *Orchestra*, you will cut a conspicuous figure among the *Repianos*, and the graceful writhings and grimaces peculiar to the art of fiddling will add dignity to your rank in the university ; especially if you are by this time in holy orders and fellow of a college : for in what situation can a personage thus dignified exhibit himself with greater propriety, than mounted on a stage, 'midst a band

of minstrels, with a fiddle under his chin?

The clergy of the church of Rome and the disciples of Luther and of Calvin may pragmatically refuse to assist at publick amusements, from an erroneous opinion that they are inconsistent with the gravity of the clerical character. The clergy of the church of England, which is doubtless the only true church, are better informed. *Vive la bagatelle* was the favourite motto of the orthodox dean of St. Patrick's, the divine author of the pious *Tale of a Tub*, than which no book

book is better calculated to inspire reverence for the Christian religion. That holy divine, Tristram Shandy, with whose chaste writings you are doubtless intimately acquainted, was so entirely of the dean's opinion, that he gloried in the character of a Jack Pudding, and obliged the world with the most extraordinary farago of sentiment, ribaldry, wit, and non-sence that was ever produced. These are examples worthy your imitation. If at any time you feel yourself possessed with the *cacoëthes scribendi*, addict yourself to works of humour, and leave sermons and other serious compositions to those dull fellows on

whom nature has bestowed neither taste nor genius.

If you have been properly attentive to the above advice, in about four years, your education will be nearly finished ; but it is impossible for you to attain that final politure so necessary to a young divine, without the help of the metropolis. Every tinge of academic rust must be filed off, and this can only be done by frequent excursive parties to town. As to times and seasons, there is, in London, always something to be learned, or something to be done. The spring months

months however are to be preferred; because you have then the greatest variety of amusements: so that amidst operas, plays, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, masquerades^(a) and occasional town-rambles, you cannot fail, at this season of the year, to advance rapidly in the knowledge of that world into which you will soon be launched, and where your voyage will be prosperous in exact proportion to your acquaintance with the ocean on which you are to sail.

There remains yet unmentioned, a branch of polite education which a young gentleman, intended for^(a) *at the Pantheon or elsewhere,* the

the church, should not neglect. I mean that miraculous art by which bags of gold and landed property are, by a single shake of the elbow, or turn of a card, conveyed from one person to another. If your companions to town are youths of family, fortune, and enterprize, they will doubtless introduce you to some of the professors of this art, male and female. Your attention, when you are in London, to this branch of knowledge, is the more necessary, because, in the universities, the institution of similar professorships hath been shamefully neglected. This neglect appears quite inexcusable,

ble, when we consider that gaming is the principal occupation of persons of every rank and profession, and that philosophically considered, it is the most rational of all employments. Whist and Backgammon are so indispensably requisite to a young Physician or Divine, that, without a knowledge of one or both, neither of them will ever make his way in the world. Why then do our universities pretend to teach a pack of stuff that can be of no possible utility, whilst students remain totally uninstructed in the only science worth cultivation. I am now speaking particularly of Oxford;

Oxford; for, at Cambridge, the want of these necessary professorships is, in some degree, supplied by its vicinity to Newmarket, where a young gentleman has frequent opportunities to mix with gamblers, and also that of acquiring a competent knowledge of the turf, which, to a young divine, may prove of considerable advantage. For this reason, in the choice of an university, Cambridge certainly deserves the preference.

The founders of our universities did not possess a degree of prescience sufficient to comprehend the
future

future importance of cards and dice; therefore they stand exculpated. But in these times of illumination and reform, the legislature will doubtless take this matter into serious consideration; and certainly very little consideration will be sufficient to convince them, that nothing would contribute so much to the reputation and utility of these seminaries of universal erudition, as the immediate institution of professorships for the purpose of inculcating the sublime science of gaming. There is a textbook of universal authority, already extant. This is a fortunate circumstance. The book I mean is,

Hoyle

Hoyle upon Whist and other fashionable games. There can be no doubt that an annual course of lectures on this author, by an able professor, would disseminate more useful instruction, and be more generally attended, than any lectures that are now read in either university; provided care be taken to prevent its lapsing into a finecure.

But I am sorry to say, that Gaming is not the only essential science which is not taught *e cathedra* at our universities. Dancing and Fencing are equally neglected. That dancing is a necessary part of the

the education of a Divine is sufficiently evident to those gentlemen and ladies who frequent assemblies in the country, where, without this holy order of men, it would be impossible to make up a dance: and with regard to fencing, the example of the reverend Mr. Bate is sufficient to prove how necessary it may be for a clergyman to defend his sacred honour with his sword. /a/

There are other sciences, which, though taught at the universities, are generally neglected by students in divinity, from an idea of their inutility to gentlemen of their cloth.

(a) ~~complete collection of all the~~ This
~~most important and useful~~
~~historical and political~~
~~information for the~~
~~use of the clergy~~
~~and the laity~~
~~in general~~
~~and in particular~~
~~for the use of the~~
~~clergy and the laity~~

This is an erroneous opinion. A smattering of any science, except divinity and moral philosophy, may be useful to a clergyman. We have seen a little knowledge of chemistry lead to a bishoprick. *a Watson*

CHAPTER IV.

ADVICE TO A YOUNG DIVINE.

CICERO, in his first journey to Athens, was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries; whence he learnt, that the gods of the people were nothing more than deceased mortals: *itaque*, says this great orator and philosopher, *ita revera principia vitæ cognovimus; neque solum cum lætitia vivendi rationem accepimus, sed etiam cum spe meliore moriendi.* You, Sir, are equally initiated. You have been ordained. You now see the popu-

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lar

lar religion in its true light. You have subscribed the thirty-nine articles; but that is of no importance: you never read them: you are therefore entirely unconcerned in the doctrine they contain. As to the Christian system, you are perfectly convinced, that it is not the religion of a gentleman; that, the impossibility of a rich man entering the kingdom of Heaven; giving away one's coat after our cloak is taken from us; turning the left cheek after receiving a blow on the right; doing good to those which dispitefully use us; praying for our enemies; being in charity with all men; preferring

2

poverty

poverty to wealth. These, I say, Sir, are doctrines so palpably contradicted by the constant tenour of the conduct of the dignified clergy, that you must necessarily conclude, they do not believe a word of the religion they profess. This is indeed a very necessary conclusion, and certainly the most charitable that can be formed: for to suppose that a wealthy bench of bishops imagine themselves followers of the apostles and the real disciples of the meek and humble Jesus, were to conclude them fools or madmen.

If they believed in the rewards and punishments promised and denounced

in the gospel, can it be supposed that any prospect of preferment would ever wharp their integrity? If they were convinced that this is a life of probation; that riches and honours are no more than sounding brass and tinkling cymbals; that endless punishment is the inevitable consequence of vice, and eternity of bliss the reward of virtue; can it be imagined that a bench of Lords Spiritual would ever so far forget their religion, as to prostitute themselves to a weak and wicked administration? or claim any Alliance therewith? This is indeed a shrewd Qu: of a very serious cast; it must be confessed it

see end of say p-79.

If, these considerations notwithstanding, there should yet remain on your mind any impresson of your early education, you would do well to recollect, that all you learnt of Christianity was from your mother and the old woman who taught you to read the Bible; and that since that time, both at school and at the university, religion hath been totally out of the question. Hence you must necessarily conclude, that your prejudices in favour of Christianity were ill founded, and that it is the religion of old women and children only. If it were considered in any other light by the reve-

rend Vice Chancellors and Heads of Houses, the study of divinity would doubtless constitute, at least, a part of the employment of those that are intended for holy orders: and if the Fellows of Colleges were not likewise indulged with a peep behind the curtain, can you possibly suppose that their studies, their occupations, their amusements, their conversation with each other, would not be, in some degree, conformable to the character of a Christian Divine?

Now, to let you more amply into a secret, with which you are not

121 *vid: a Lord North; so much entirely respected, nay even revered in the new world, for his eternally memorable humane Invasion.*

entirely unacquainted, I will tell you, without farther reserve or circumlocution, that the system of Christianity is so totally incompatible with the sacred honour, the sublime policy, the laudable ambition of kings, nobles, and gentlemen, and so diametrically opposite to the interest of the priesthood, that it hath been determined to confine the belief of it to the lower class of people, to whom a religion of some sort is necessary. The advantages resulting from this determination are manifold and obvious. Kings, ministers, of state, the lords spiritual and temporal, members of parlia-

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ment,

ment, and all the inferior clergy, are thus at once emancipated. They are now in the full enjoyment of all their darling passions without restraint, and the road of ambition is no longer impeded by the authority of a troublesome religion.

When, in full convocation it was unanimously resolved, that Christianity is incompatible with modern policy, with the obligations of a gentleman, and the dignity of the clergy, some were of opinion that appearance ought still to be preserved; but this notion was scouted by a great majority; one of which
wisely

wisely observed, that as the re-establishment of Paganism was the ultimate purpose of their deliberations, dissimulation was unnecessary; that, though the Christian religion might do well enough for the vulgar, yet, as the nobility, gentry, and clergy were already converted, the lower class of people would doubtless, in a short time, follow the example of their superiors, and the sooner this consummation was effected the better: for these reasons he thought hypocrisy an unnecessary vice, especially in a nation of philosophers and free-thinkers.

Matters

Matters being thus settled, I shall now proceed to delineate the outlines of your conduct on your first appointment to a curacy. As much will depend on your appearance as a gentleman, you cannot be too attentive to your dress. Things are not yet so far advanced as to allow you to wear your hair in a bag, a club, or a queue; but a friezeur of any genius will manage your fore-top and side-curls so as to give you the appearance, in front, of a well-drest beau, and he will roll up the hair in your poll so close to your head, that, when you are viewed in the rear, you may be easily supposed

supposed to have your queue concealed under the standing collar of your coat. There is not the least necessity for your frock being black: light grey is universally allowed, and as to your furtout, which you will wear at least six months in the year, it may be a light drab, or any colour you think proper. The celebrated Churchill, you know, carried his point in his dispute with the bishop, relative to leather breeches and white stockings, and since that memorable epocha, every clergyman of taste and spirit hath followed his example. His Herculean club is no less worthy your imitation

tation: but this concerns your morning dress only. When you prepare for an assembly, black-fatten waistcoat and breeches are indispensable. Your knee-buckles must be of paste, and those in your shoes of silver, of the prince's last fashion, and so large as to touch the ground on each side, weighing at least a pound each buckle. Ruffles at the wrists have not yet been introduced among divines, except when attached to lawn sleeves; but there is no canon against chitterlings: so that you may exhibit as much cambrick on your breast as would serve for both. Half way down this
chiderling

chitterling you will affix a brooch (*Anglice*, a spit) beset with garnets or brilliant paste. This pretty ornament will be of great utility in employing your left hand whilst you are reading prayers: by habit you will learn to finger it gracefully, and you will thereby attract the eyes of the female part of the congregation to the contemplation both of your bejou and of your fair hand. But, before I conclude the article of dress, let us not forget one very important circumstance. I mean the cock of your hat. In former times, the hats of the clergy were only distinguished from those
of

of Quakers by a silk twisted roll and rose. These have been long condemned as too pragmatical. According to the present clerical *ton*, you are to imitate, not Aminadab Broadbrim, but Captain Flash or Sergeant Kite. No article of dress indicates a man's character so distinctly as the cock of his hat.

From the total inattention of our schools and universities to qualify you for a publick orator, you may possibly suppose that the manner of performing divine service is a matter of no importance. In this conjecture you are mistaken. A little

the reflection will convince you, that this inattention is the result of consummate premeditation and design. The surest means of getting rid of an inconvenient religion, is to convince the people of the insincerity of their teachers, and that insincerity cannot be proved by any method so effectual, as by the manner of performing the service. Now in order to promote the great design to the utmost of your abilities, let it be your first care to read prayers with all possible rapidity. I knew a young clergyman who could dispatch the morning service in fifteen minutes. He was indeed a youth

youth of extraordinary abilities, and has since been rewarded with a bishoprick. In reading the lessons, you must loll carelessly on your left elbow, and in reading the prayers, as you know them by heart, you may amuse yourself by surveying the susceptible part of your congregation ; for as every female will take the compliment to herself, you will, by this means, establish an interest in every family.

As to your sermons, never waste a moment in composition. Truſter, that sincere and indefatigable friend to the clergy, will supply you with
a sufficient

a sufficient number so well engraved, that not one of your congregation in the gallery above you can distinguish them from your own writing. Besides, be your abilities ever so great, to compose your own sermons, were, among the bucks of the cloth, an absolute *bore*. This word *bore* is a fashionable expression, and it is the more valuable for not being found in any dictionary and having neither derivation nor intrinsic meaning. You cannot use it too often in your conversation with fine gentlemen and ladies.

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The length of your sermons must never exceed a quarter of an hour. The 'squire, pleased with your volubility and dispatch, will doubtless ask you to dine with him. When the victuals are on the table, he will tell you by a nod, that you are to say grace. On this occasion, beware of Presbyterian prolixity, or Puritanical gravity. A short insignificant sentence, carelessly pronounced, will create a prepossession in your favour: and after dinner, when the ladies are retired, you may venture to whisper so loud as to be heard, that you hope the 'squire will not forget *our old friend*. He will instantly fill a bumper,

per, and swear that the young parson is a damned honest fellow. Take care never to let the bottle stand with *you*, and when the bells cease chiming for evening prayers, fill your glass to the brim, drink the 'squire's good health, and say that you will be with him again by the time the toast has gone round. You then stride away to church, and read the service with the same unintelligible volubility that you used to repeat your task when a school-boy. You now find the great utility (which whilst at school you did not comprehend) of teaching boys to gabble two or three hundred lines of Horace or Virgil

with the rapidity of the wheel of a water mill.

You now return to the 'squire, who during your absence has taken a short nap. You observe that reading prayers is a devilish dry business, then fill your glass and resume the conversation. If it turns on politics, you will naturally praise or abuse the minister according to the 'squire's political creed ; but do not neglect the first opportunity of displaying your knowledge of horses and dogs, and of declaring your fondness for rural diversions. Tell him that you are a dab at finding a hare, and that for breaking a pointer

pointer you will not turn your back on any man in England. 'Tis ten to one that, before you part, he will make you a present of a hunter. In about two hours the 'squire will have got his dose. You will then retire to your lodgings in proper cue to make love to the fair daughter of your hostess.

In your conversation with the jovial part of the parishioners, nothing will so effectually promote the great design of your mission as a frequent use of petty oaths; such as, *Od rabbit it—By jingo—By the Lord Harry—As I hope to be shaved*

H 3 —Odsounds

—*Odsounds*—*Cod's bodikins*—*Devil take me*, and the like. But above all things, let me advise you to furnish yourself with a sufficient number of bawdy allusions and luscious stories. These your reading at the university will abundantly supply. Such tales are most delightful when told by the parson. In company with your fair parishioners, you must never let slip any occasion of introducing a *double entendre*. I knew a young clergyman, who, without any other recommendation, made his fortune by marrying a rich widow. Christening dinners, to which you will always be invited,

never

never fail to produce this sort of pleasant conversation. The midwife and yourself must keep up the shuttlecock. Remember, on these occasions, not to leave your cork-screw in your other breeches. It were better to forget your sermon on a Sunday morning.

Dinner being over and the cloth removed, when the ingredients for punch are set upon the table, draw the bowl towards you and proceed to cut the lemons, telling the guests, that you have made more punch in your time than would float a man of war. The reputation of excelling

in this art will procure you many a good dinner: for, though in reality you may know but little of the matter, it is in this small accomplishment as in things of greater importance; if a man has but the assurance to puff himself, the world will give him credit for the superiority he assumes.

The nectar being now ready, like the divine in Hogarth's *Midnight Conversation*, you brandish the ladle and fill the glasses. In the capacity of hereditary toast-master, after drinking the young Christian, you will give the following toasts in
regular

regular succession:—*God speed the plough—The old trade of basket making—May good seed never be sown in a barren soil.* These, you will observe to the company, winking at the same time at the midwife, are standing toasts at a christening. You may then entertain the good folks with a merry story out of Joe Miller, and finally oblige them with two or three Bacchanalian songs. After a day thus spent, you will retire with the pleasing reflexion of having stamped your character on the minds of your congregation, a character that cannot fail to exalt their devotion
when

when you next admonish them from the desk or pulpit.

Dancing at publick assemblies is an amusement, I had almost said a duty, of all others the most becoming and consistent with the character of an English clergyman. There is something so divine in the act of capering, like King David before the ark, to the scraping of a cracked *Crowdero* at a country hop, that I have often thought a congregation of pious Christians would be much edified, if the young pomatomed, powdered, and perfumed curate, on his entering the church, were
suffered

suffered to dance up the aisle, with the clerk at his heels, to the tune of the Black Joke, played on the organ or bassoon in the gallery; but if both these instruments are wanting, I think it might be sung by the clerk's wife, and, in that case, the words would add considerably to the effect. Seriously, if this solemn act of devotion were made a part of divine service, the universities would then think it necessary to institute Dancing Professorships, and, with that advantage, what a glorious figure would the young clergy make in country assembly-rooms, when now, without ever hav-

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ing learnt to turn out their feet, hold up their heads, or wield their arms, their attitudes are so bewitchingly graceful, and they are already so nimble as to tread, not more than five or six times in an evening, on their partner's toes, or kick the shins of the gentlemen next them. If the young clergy were thus properly instructed by a course of lectures, illustrated with occasional caperings by the professor, we might soon expect to see them dance minuets; an act of solemnity which they would doubtless perform in their robes. On the commencement of country dances, they might
either

either tuck up their gowns as the women do their long trails, or, like Venetian senators at a ball, strip them off and dance in their cassocks.

The institution of Dancing Professorships would produce many considerable advantages to the clergy. It might annex to their first profession, a second infinitely more lucrative. The minor canons of Winchester and other places would not, if thus instructed, suffer a pack of French valets, barbers, and taylor, who never learned to dance, to amass fortunes by teaching

ing that art, whilst themselves are starving; and certainly it would be much better for the inferior clergy in London to figure on the stage at the Opera-house, than to harraß themselves with reading prayers for half-a-crown a time. That the young clergy would very soon arrive at a considerable degree of proficiency in the art of dancing, I am convinced, from the example of a minor canon, who, without any instructions from a dancing-master, could hop down twenty couple on one foot, with the other raised, like a Dutchman skating, and pointed exactly

exactly at his partner's nose. I never saw so fine an attitude!

I recommend the immediate cultivation of this noble art or science, call it which you please, to the present clergy; because, though the Christian religion may require dancing, it may not be tolerated by that which is to succeed. On the introduction of Paganism, the dancing days of the priesthood may possibly be at an end; so that they should make a proper use of the present moment. Cicero, in his defence of Murena, who was charged by Cato with the crime of dancing,

dancing, admonishes the accuser, "not to throw out such a calumny so inconsiderately, or to call a Roman consul a dancer; but to consider, how many other crimes a man must be guilty of before that of dancing could be truly objected to him, since nobody ever danced, even in private, who was not either drunk or mad." But Cicero was a Stoick, or rather of that sect called Academics, who were somewhat rigid in their morals. The established religion of the Romans, that is, the religion of the vulgar, certainly did not anathematize dancers in general, though probably the

augurs and other holy personages might deem the diversion of dancing a profanation of their character.

Established religions ought to concern only the uninformed part of mankind. The nobility, gentry, and particularly the clergy, have, from their rank and superior understanding, an indisputable privilege to form each his own creed, to think freely and act accordingly. This was precisely the case among the Greeks and Romans. Their priests, nobles, and gentlemen, were all philosophers of some peculiar sect; Stoicks, Peripatetics,

I Academics,

Academics, or Epicureans, yet professing the established religion. Hence the infinite superiority of Paganism over Christianity. The inventors of the latter committed a very great mistake in compelling all ranks of men, even the clergy themselves, to the observance of the same moral and religious duties; and, which is particularly hard upon the clergy, these moral and religious duties are incompatible with the full enjoyment of those good things for the attainment of which ecclesiastical dignities and emoluments were ordained, and without which a curacy were equal to a bishoprick.



On

On these considerations it is wisely determined to get rid of Christianity with all convenient speed, and to establish the religion of the enlightened Greeks and Romans in its stead. Hence you discover the reason for taking so much pains to instruct the young gentlemen designed for the church, in the mysteries of heathen mythology, and for the total neglect of the Gospel in all our schools and universities.

According to the system of the ancients, every man will be at liberty to chuse his own sect. The

clergy have unanimously resolved upon that of Epicurus. This resolution is certainly most pious and honest. Their tenets and their lives will then no longer contradict each other, and they will be relieved from the impertinent admonitions of an internal monitor. Pleasure being professedly, as disciples of Epicurus, their *summum bonum*, they will indulge in every luxury of the table without any impeachment of their moral character.

I remember to have dined some time ago, at a friend's house, in company with about a dozen of his acquaintance

acquaintance, amongst which sat a grave divine. The lady at the head of the table asked him what part of the fowl he chose? He answered, *A wing*. Now, whether he spoke so as not to be heard, or whether the lady, in imitation of great personages, had acquired a habit of asking questions without attending to the answers, it is very certain she did not hear him, and proceeded to help the rest of the company. The parson, like a staunch pointer, kept his eye steadily fixed on the game. Three of the four wings were already distributed. Have you never been


in a cock-pit when the last decisive battle of the main was in suspense? if not you can form no adequate idea of the poignant anxiety at this moment visible in the face of this preacher of self-denial. But, when he saw her plunge her fork into the fourth and last wing, his patience instantly forsook him, and he exclaimed, with the voice of a Stentor, "*For God's sake, madam, a wing!*"—at the same time, by the agitation of his elbow overturning the oyster-sauce into his neighbour's lap.

The rage of appetite was never more forcibly depicted than in the
scene

scene which I have thus attempted to describe; but it beggars all description. The pencil of a Hogarth, or the lecture of an Alexander Stevens, would have come nearer the original. Now the ungovernable appetite of this reverend divine became ridiculous and despicable, chiefly from a recollection of the precepts of Christianity. If he had been an Epicurean *ex professo*, his anxiety would have appeared perfectly characteristic. This perpetual clashing of precept with example, is, in truth, so glaring that it must unavoidably expose the Christian clergy to constant ridicule, and

particularly those of the reformed churches, who have imprudently exposed the Gospel to the examination of the vulgar. When those who profess themselves the disciples of the meek, the humble Jesus, and the successors of the indigent apostles, are observed lolling in their coaches, and indulging themselves in every refinement of extreme luxury, preaching mortification, yet rioting in excess, Candour stands amazed, and pronounces them infidels, that she may not call them ideots or madmen. Would any man in his senses prostitute himself to a minister in expectation of a
richer

richer fee?—Would the whole body of the clergy tread so eagerly on each other's heels in pursuit of wealth, if they believed it “*easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven?*” Your Reverences will tell me there is a mistake in the translation; that for *camel* we should read *cable*. Be it so; even a cable would require a needle of no inconsiderable size. But suppose, for *needle* you were to read *fiddle*, and for *eye*, *belly*. A cable, or even a camel, if it were a young one, would pass with ease through
the



the belly of the bass fiddle built
for the commemoration. *Bye sure-
ly, that would be.*

You have heard, no doubt, for the newspapers have been full of it, of a late confederation in Germany, in order to prevent the Emperor from exchanging a part of his dominions for those of another potentate. This was all a mere pretence. It was in fact a general council or convocation of legates and plenipotentiaries, for the sole purpose of extirpating the Christian religion. The cardinal legate from his Holiness opened the convocation from the chair, by a very elaborate and learned

learned speech; in which, after dwelling for some time on the Pope's condescension in consulting with heretics, he observed, " that religions, like empires, have a beginning, an *ackma*, and an end; that it was now time to throw off the mask; that the Roman Catholic system was not calculated for a philosophic age like the present; that his Holiness had lost all his authority over the consciences both of princes and of their subjects; that he was weary of a dissimulation by which even his own immediate subjects were not deceived; that his dominions, which under a pagan government

was

was the most populous, fertile, and delightful country in the world, was a mere desert; that a conscientious christian, consistent with the humiliating principles of his religion, could neither be a pope, a cardinal, a bishop, nor even a prebendary; that upon mature consideration and consultation with his cardinals, it was the unanimous opinion of the consistory, that the religion of the ancient Greeks and Romans was much better adapted to the nature of man, and the dignity and influence of the priesthood; that the ancient oracles were of greater authority than papal bulls; that the flight
of

of birds and the inspection of guts were better engines of state than decrees of councils; that the return to Paganism from Christianity was much easier than was imagined; that the worship of idols was the same in both religions; that prophecies, prodigies, and miracles, were equally common among the Romans; that their high priest was a pope, and their augurs cardinals; that the vestal virgins were nuns; that their infernal regions was our hell, and their Pluto the devil."

This sensible harangue was received with universal applause.

Baron

Baron von Klinkenhausen, plenipotentiary from his Imperial Majesty, now rose ; and, after a proper compliment to the cardinal, declared it to be the emperor's opinion, that in matters of religion his holiness had an indisputable right to command obedience ; that he had no objection to any religion, except that of Mahomet ; that he should be very glad to get rid of his confessor and of every other impertinent ecclesiastic ; that convents would make excellent barracks for his soldiers ; and that nothing would give him greater pleasure, than to give husbands from his army to
twenty

twenty thousand nuns, that were now languishing, to the disgrace of humanity, in rigorous confinement.

Prince Powwowwitzzarrotzky, plenipotentiary from her imperial majesty of all the Russias, spoke next. "His imperial mistress, he said, cheerfully acceded to the general design of extirpating a religion, the fundamental doctrines of which confined the sublime ambition of princes within the narrow limits of groveling morality; a religion that made no distinction between the right and wrong of an empress and that of a beggar; a religion that

was

was a perpetual check to conquest, and to every great political design; a religion that would not authorize capital revenge for the greatest domestic injuries. For these reasons, he said, the introduction of Paganism should have his hearty concurrence; provided there were in that religion nothing contrary to the diversion of the Knaut."

Monsieur Papillon, the French minister, made a short speech, in which he observed, that the members of the Royal Academy of Sciences were already converted; that provided the new religion did not interfere

interfere with the privilege of giving fashions to all Europe, face-daubing, dancing, hair-dressing, conjugal gallantry, and the royal chase, his Most Christian Majesty could have no objection ; yet on this condition, that henceforward, in lieu of his Most *Christian*, he should assume the title of his Most *Pagan Majesty*."

Don Fandango, the plenipo. of the Catholic King, rising slow and solemn, began his speech with an eulogy on the wisdom of his royal master, calling him, most justly, the Solomon of the age. The king of Spain, he said, was permitted by his

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confessor

confessor to believe, that religion was invented for the sole benefit of priests and princes; that when the austerity of monks begins to excite contempt and ridicule, it is time to give up the game; that Saint Cybele would naturally supersede the holy Virgin, being not only the mother, but also the grandmother of the gods; that Saint Neptune was infinitely preferable to Saint Anthony as a preacher to fishes; that Saint Christopher was a mere boy, when compared to Saint Hercules; that Saint Mars, though less cruel, delights sufficiently in human blood to succeed Saint Dominic as

patron of the Inquisition ; that Saint Venus might supply the place of Saint Mary Magdalen ; and that the Carmelites cannot have a better patron than Saint Priapus. Don Fandango, after a short pause, concluded his speech with saying, that as the word *catholic* had no more reference to christianity than to any other religion, he hoped his majesty of Spain would be permitted to retain his present title of distinction ; that he was authorized to assent to the introduction of the ancient religion, provided his Catholic Majesty might be indulged in the amuse-

ment of slaying Indians, burning Jews, and shooting sparrows.

Lieutenant-general Frederick Stimme, his Prussian Majesty's plenipotentiary, now rose. "His royal master's sentiments, he said, concerning religion were sufficiently known by his poetical epistles; that his quondam intimate friend Voltaire had opened his eyes in regard to Christianity, that having read a French translation of the poet Lucretius, he was himself a confirmed Epicurean; and that he had in his service a hundred thousand Peripatetic philosophers ready to main-

tain the religion of the ancients by arguments of great weight."

The next and last minister plenipotentiary that spoke, was a Myn Heer van Bos. "It was well known, he said, to all Europe, that their High Mightinesses had never worshipped any other deity than the God Mercury; that since they had been informed that the disciples of Zeno, called Stoicks, were as staunch predestinarians as Calvin himself; that as, according to the Pythagoreans, one might hope, in a future state, to animate the body of a hog, a metamorphosis more

K 3 congenial

congenial to the soul of a Dutchman, than to make an angel and a trumpeter of it, especially as the Dutch have no taste for music; and that since an English calvinistical teacher and philosopher had already let the cat out of the bag, their High Mightinesses would readily accede to the resolution of extirpating Christianity, with the consent and approbation of the king of France; provided they might be allowed to wear six pair of breeches, to smoke tobacco from morning 'till night, to feast upon Scottish herrings, and to cheat all mankind in the way of trade."

trade." To this reasonable stipulation the cardinal nodded his assent.

This preliminary business being ended, his eminence was about to dismiss the assembly, when a lank-haired North-American ambassador thundered with his heel against the door. The sentinel, it seems, taking him for a pickpocket, had kicked him down stairs. The cardinal, being informed who he was, ordered the door-keeper to tell him, that he could not possibly be admitted: first, because he had neither the manners nor appearance of a gentleman; and secondly, because

the duplicity, dishonesty, and nauseous hypocritical cant of the two North-American saints, ^(a) was too notorious not to be a scandal to any religion.

His excellency the American ambassador being thus dismissed, the door-keeper announced one Amiadab Prim, a chosen vessel, sent by the people called Quakers. He was ordered to be admitted; but not chusing to take off his hat, he was immediately turned out again, and told, that nothing could be more absurd than for the Quakers to wish to change their religion,

(a) *Dr. Whitfield & Wesley? when*

when all the world knew that they had no religion at all.

There remained yet another ambassador at the door, who earnestly craved admittance. His name, he said, was Tom Netherfole, a shoemaker by trade, but by the call of the Holy Spirit, a preacher of damnation; that he was deputed by a religious sect called Methodists. Being admitted, and allowed to declare the purport of his embassy, he began his speech; but, being unable to utter a single sentence with grammatical accuracy sufficient to render his language intelligible to
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the interpreter, he was desired to withdraw.

Possibly you may be surprised that no plenipotentiary from England appeared in this congress; but your surprise will cease, when you recollect that the church of England is a kind of olio, composed of Popery, Lutheranism, and Calvinism, and that it must therefore stand or fall with these three pillars, on which it was raised.

Having thus, to the best of my information, given you a faithful account of the Continental Congress,

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it remains only to advise, that, in your future conduct, you constantly bear in mind the great project of the total overthrow of Christianity, and the establishment of the more convenient religion of the ancient Romans. Nothing will more effectually promote this laudable design, than a constant disregard of the duties and abstinances positively enjoined by Christianity. The people fix their eyes with great attention on the clergy, and are more influenced by their conduct than by their preaching. Whenever you preach a charity sermon, you must not, on any account, give sixpence
out

out of your own pocket; such an act would lead the people to suppose that you possessed a smattering of Christian charity; a supposition that might prejudice the congregation in favour of a religion, which they must be prepared to relinquish for a better. I do not advise you, in imitation of a certain Israelitish doctor,^(a) to pocket any of the cash collected on these occasions, because Pagans would have beheld such an act of villainy with astonishment and horror.

If peradventure you reside in the country, there are two things, which,

(a) *vid. Dr. Schomberg of Bath* —

if properly attended to, will give you a good chance for a fat living; or, if you have one already, for a second; these are, constantly hunting with the peer or 'squire, and playing at backgammon with him on a rainy day. I never behold a reverend Nimrod flying over a five-bar-gate, that I am not struck with his resemblance to Jesus Christ riding to Jerusalem on an ass.

I have now nothing further to advise except that you render yourself serviceable at the general election for the county or borough in which you reside, by getting drunk every night
with

with the dubious voters, and haranguing the mob every morning from the hustings, in the noble attitude of Raphael's Paul preaching at Athens. By thus rendering yourself conspicuous, possibly some rich patriot, enamoured of your talents and political doctrine, may adopt you for his heir: you may then assume a new character, and, like a butterfly, deposit your name and *exuviae* together.

CHAPTER V.

ADVICE TO PREBENDARIES.

IN consequence of a proper attention to the admonitions contained in the preceeding chapters, you are now a canon of Windsor, or prebendary of Durham, Canterbury, Winchester, or some other opulent cathedral. You have besides, livings of five or six hundred a-year, where the duty is done by your curates for thirty or at most forty pounds per annum each. If they happen to have wives and families, they may possibly

possibly have frequent occasion to exert their œconomical faculties. So much the better. Luxury in the inferior clergy is a vice. The apostles were all poor men. Parson Adams, to the best of my recollection, had not above twenty pounds a-year, and yet he was perfectly contented and happy. These arguments, if they should presume to complain, will stop their mouths; besides curates are a mere drug; so that they may decamp whenever they please. An advertisement in the papers will give you the choice of half a score. Charity begins at home. A prebendary has occasion for every shilling

ting of his revenue. He must keep servants, a good table, and a carriage. His wife and daughters must dress fashionably, frequent publick diversions, and play at cards.

Cards are now no longer the amusement, but the principal occupation, the business of the polite world: therefore, as most of your time must be appropriated to this rational, this instructive, this philosophical, this moral employment, you cannot spend your mornings better than in the study of Hoyle, which, with the other red book, will

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suffici-

sufficiently occupy all your leisure. The rest of your library is totally useless, except now and then a *Review*, in order to enable you to give your opinion occasionally on recent publications. Books of Divinity are quite out of the question: of these you have read enough when you had no better employment: besides, in the present constitution of things, they are all become obsolete.

If, out of frolic, you should at any time chuse to preach a sermon, let the subject be some mystical point of divinity; so that it may be totally

tally unintelligible to the congregation. The people of which congregations are generally composed admire most what they least understand. As to the Christian duties of humility, charity, abstinence, mortification, and self-denial, they might do well enough whilst you were a poor curate. Such topicks would now give occasion to invidious reflexions: they are duties, with which, in your present situation, you have no concern. I remember a young clergyman's preaching a sermon against adultery, who the night before had been surprized in bed with the wife of one of his

parishioners. As he came out of the church, the injured husband seized him by the collar and threw him into a horse-pond.

We learn from an old adage, that a man is best known by the character of his associates. For this reason, I must admonish you not to admit the minor canons to any degree of familiarity. They are poor, and consequently men of no character. You may employ them as preceptors to your children, or to superintend your household during your absence, and you may now and then admit them to your table
when

when you have no better company. When you want to get rid of them, as soon as they have drank *Church and King*, you may take out your watch, and, looking towards the bottom of the table, say, you fancy it is almost time for evening prayers. When these thread-bare drudges are gone, you push back your wig, seat yourself afresh on your chair, open your countenance, and, patting the lid of your snuff-box, facetiously apologize to the company for the necessity of now and then admitting inferiors to one's table. You then whisper a toast to the baronet, on your

right hand, and, setting down your glass, you exclaim, *Vive la bagatelle.* Thus the laick part of the company are relieved from all restraint, and the evening is spent in social jocundity and ease. About eight o'clock, tea being announced, you join the ladies in the drawing-room, where the card-tables being prepared, the company sits down to crown whist, with half a guinea or a guinea on the rubber, and you break up 'between eleven and twelve. Such were the lives of the apostles and primitive fathers of the church. *you belong to.*

If

If there happens to be a company of strolling players in the town, three nights in the week, attended by your wife and daughters, you may spend at the theatre; but you must not so far forget your rank as to mix with the actresses behind the scenes; that privilege belongs to the younger clergy. Plays, you know, afford a most rational entertainment; and that they have a natural tendency to promote morality, is evinced by the virtuous lives of those who frequent the theatres.

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But, though this necessary round of amusements will occupy much the greatest part of your time, business must not be entirely neglected. The study of the two

p-145. red books, with the perfect knowledge of which your interest is so inseparably connected, must, on no account, be omitted. One will teach you how to fill your card-purse, and from the other you will learn the names of the great men in power, whom you are to court in expectation of a bishoprick. These severe studies will generally employ your morning hours: nevertheless, you will find it necessary
to

to appropriate some portion of your time to the receipt of your rents, and correspondence with your curates concerning your tythes. You will also have frequent occasion to write letters to the lawyers and attornies employed in carrying on law suits against your parishioners. On this subject let me conjure you never to let the feelings of humanity clash with the sacred interest of the church, nor warp the pious severity of divine justice. “If you yourself were only concerned in these litigations, you would be the last man in the world to ruin a poor man for the non-payment of his rent, his tythe,

or

or modus; but this is the cause of the church, of religion, of the whole body of the clergy to the latest posterity: besides to speak the truth, these farmers are such a pack of rascals that they deserve no compassion."

I have promised to conduct you to the summit of ecclesiastical dignity and preferment; and I will fulfil that promise: but I must inform you, that your attention to my admonitions must increase in proportion to your proximity to the goal. Never forget that the king makes bishops, and that,
confe-

consequently, the minister for the time being is your sole object. You are not yet sufficiently elevated to make a point blank attack on a chancellor of the exchequer; but by gradually extending your influence in the corporation, and among the voters for the county in your several parishes, you will in time attain the honour of being mentioned to him by the peer that makes the members; and your interest at court will increase in proportion to the increase of your parliamentary interest in the county. Mean while, you must be exceedingly careful, even when convers-

ing

ing with your most intimate friends, never to let slip a single patriotick expression, nor seem dissatisfied with taxes nor with any other measure of government. There are indeed many examples in our history of turbulent men forcing themselves into power by opposing the minister; but, in the ecclesiastical line, that method does not succeed; it is therefore wisely abandoned.

As to the wisdom and honesty of the minister, they are no concern of yours. If you suffer conscience to obstruct your road to preferment, I have done with you at once; and
the

the best advice I can give you, is to retire to one of your livings in the country, and spend the remainder of your life in obscurity. But, Sir, I presume you have had a liberal education, and that you have by this time, shook off the trammels of a religion of which humility, scrupulous integrity, and self-denial are the fundamental principles; a religion, that presents an insurmountable bar to the attainment of wealth, rank, and power, the desiderata of all mankind. Your superiors, in compliance with the times, have skipt over this bar with great agility. They yet preserve the
semblance

semblance of the old impracticable religion; but it requires very little penetration to discover, that they are sincere proselytes to the doctrines of that sublime philosopher Epicurus who laughed at divine providence, who proved beyond a doubt that the soul dies with the body, and whose *summum bonum* was pleasure.

CHAPTER VI.

ADVICE TO A BISHOP.

THUS instructed, you have seized some golden opportunity of being serviceable to the minister. You have abused the opposition in a pamphlet. You have flattered his confidential secretary in the dedication of a volume of sermons, written by one of your curates. You have turned the scale of a contested election. You have presented a Spanish lap-dog to a favourite mistress. For these services you are rewarded with a Welsh bishoprick.

Give me leave therefore to congratulate your lordship on having, at once, stepped over the head of every commoner in the kingdom, and being honourably seated among the peers in the upper house. You can hardly forbear laughing when you first take your seat on the reverend bench ; but, my lord, you must now learn to laugh in your sleeve. Notwithstanding what you have retained in commendam, you have not much increased your income ; but the same line of conduct, relative to the minister for the time being, with a steady resolution to support all his measures, good or bad, in the house of Lords, will
infallibly

infallibly secure you a speedy translation to a better see.

Thus elevated, your lordship will be fully convinced how necessary it is to exchange the Christian religion for one of greater latitude; for, though in voting with a profligate, sanguinary minister, you are kept in countenance by a very great majority of your bench; yet you will observe in all their faces a blush of conscience, which it is impossible entirely to suppress; and probably when you retire into your closet, and "commune with your own heart," you may not be quite so happy as if no

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such

such religion as Christianity had ever existed. Lord Lyttelton (I think it is Lord Lyttelton) in one of his Dialogues makes the speaker observe, that there is no situation so deplorable, as that in which a man is under the necessity of acting contrary to the dictates of his conscience. It is indeed a very deplorable situation; and for that reason, to use a more fashionable word, Christianity is certainly a *bore*.

Now, my lord, this watchful inmate conscience is entirely governed, not by the religion we profess, but by that in which we believe;

therefore get rid of Christianity, and conscience will give you very little trouble. Surely few arguments are sufficient to persuade a man to do every thing in his power to silence so impertinent a monitor. But, in the laudable design of introducing Paganism into this kingdom, you are urged by a still stronger motive; a motive that, like a snow-ball, gathers weight as you roll upwards towards Lambeth. Yes, my lord, like Sisyphus, you will have up-hill work of it; but with my assistance you will infallibly reach the summit at last. Christianity may do well enough for a poor curate; but cer-

tainly no religion in the world was ever less calculated for a bishop.

Stimulated by this additional motive, you will doubtless neglect no opportunity of promoting the great work; but the final consummation must not be attempted until the plot is ripe for execution, and your lordship has obtained archiepiscopal dignity and power. Meanwhile, in converting the inferior clergy, you will have great influence; which influence will be in proportion to the magnitude of your patronage.

Preaching, I confess, is no part of the duty of a bishop: nevertheless

I must

I must advise you to mount the pulpit now and then, in order to prepare the common people (of which all congregations consist) for the intended catastrophe; for though the people of England have been ever ready to follow the example of their kings in the change of religion, it was not effected without the elocution and example of the clergy. In this case borrowed discourses will not answer the purpose. You must now sit down to write your own sermons, which you will easily compile from the writings of the heathen philosophers. You will naturally begin with those, whose

religion differed least from Christianity: I mean Socrates, Plato and Cicero, the great ornaments of the Academic sect.

If your lordship should be at a loss for a text, I will venture to recommend the following wise saying of the first of these sages: *All I know is, that I know nothing.*—If it should make the congregation laugh, so much the better. It will open their hearts, and prepare them for the cordial reception of your doctrine. Men are never so open to conviction as when they are in a good humour. Whitfield, the great

great apostle of the Methodists, whose knowledge of mankind was indisputable, found his audience never better disposed to shudder at damnation, than after telling them a merry story about a leg of mutton and turnips. St. Justin Martyr, you know, my lord, entertained so high an opinion of Socrates, that he thought it possible he might be saved; and Erasmus tells us, that, as often as he considered the behaviour of this great man at the time of his death, he could with difficulty refrain from exclaiming, *Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis!* That he possessed true Christian forbearance

~~was not the case~~ is

is evident from his not beating his wife. Laertius tells us, that when Alcibiades asked him, how he could possibly bear with such a vixen? he answered, that by exercising his patience she taught him to bear the other evils of life with resignation.

As to Plato, he was so far a Christian, that he believed the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of reward and punishment. He was of opinion, that happiness consists in virtue and a competency. By competency he certainly meant as much as would enable one to live like a gentleman.

gentleman. I have no doubt that he would have allowed a bishop from three to ten thousand a-year. This divine philosopher believed also in the existence of demons, which, you know, my lord, are our own "devils." I need not tell a person of your lordship's erudition, that the primitive fathers of the Christian church were most of them followers of Plato, and that he is highly spoken of in their writings; particularly by St. Ambrose, St. Denis, St. Augustine, Eusebius, Basil, Origen, Theodoret, Cyril, Alexandrinus, Lactantius, &c. St. Augustin, in the seventh book of his *Confessions*,
acknow-

acknowledges, that in the books of the ancient philosophers he had found almost the whole of the beginning of the Gospel of St. John. Eusebius was firmly of opinion that Plato was ^{/a/}_a Trinitarian. Eusebius was certainly right; for we are assured by Zonares (your lordship has read Zonares) that in the reign of Constantine the sixth, his body was found with a plate of gold hung round his neck, importing, that Christ should be born of a virgin; and that he believed in him by anticipation.

(a) Horsleyan

Plato.

Plato, I think, died about 350 years before the incarnation: so that his prophetick powers seem to have stretched into futurity as far as the generality of our own Jewish prophets. With regard to the magnitude of his faith, it must be calculated from the birth of Christ inversely. Now the merit of a believer, calculating *forward* from the event, increases only in *arithmetical* progression; but, in a retrograde calculation, the progression is geometrical; because it requires a much greater degree of faith to believe an event before it happens, than after. Hence it is evident, that though the faith
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of us believers of the present age be much more meritorious than that of the primitive Christians, yet we are outdone by Plato in a proportion almost beyond calculation: so that, though Justin Martyr might entertain some doubt of the salvation of Socrates, we may be very certain that Plato is in Heaven; or at least, that he will go thither after his escape from purgatory, in which place he must probably spend some ages, as it does not appear that his original sin was ever washed away by baptism. What number of years this purgative operation may require, I am not theologist enough
to

to determine: it seems however but reasonable, that a man, who believed a *Tartarus*, should spend some little time in it. He calls it the prison of the wicked, and supposed it to be in the centre of the earth, as your lordship remembers to have read in his *Phædon*. In this article of faith also Plato was a Christian. Our creeds affirm, that Christ *descended* into Hell. Now it is impossible to *descend* from the surface of this earth without moving towards the centre: if, therefore, Hell had been situated in any other part of the universe than in the centre of this globe,

Christ

Christ must necessarily have *ascended*
into Hell.

From these considerations, I think
your lordship may safely affirm
that Plato was, to all intents and
(a) purposes, a Christian, except the
important article of baptism; but
that crime he may possibly, in two
thousand years, have expiated in
purgatory.

Come we now to Cicero, the
third of these illustrious Academics.
His opinions concerning the great
Creator and preserver of the uni-
verse, the immortality of the soul,

(a) comp. A. D. Horsley's the
Charge at St. Alban's, 1783.
~~nothing is to be said of him~~
~~as a Christian~~
~~though he was a Christian~~

the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice, were, like those of Socrates and Plato, truly Christian. Hence your lordship may take occasion to extol the wisdom and virtue of the ancient philosophers, before the introduction of our present religion, and you may thence logically conclude that Christianity was unnecessary; ^(a) especially, as, according to Erasmus, Cicero was an inspired writer*, and consequently an apostle by anticipation. His authority being thus established, you

* *Me legentem sic afficere M. Tullius, ut dubitare non possim, quin illud pectus, unde ista prodierunt, aliqua divinitas occuparet.*

Erasm. Ep. ap Ullattenum.

~~Erasm. Ep. ap Ullattenum.~~

you may give a fly stab to the doctrine of immortality, by proving that this inspired Cicero was, at times, of a contrary opinion*. This immortality of the soul, my lord, must, as soon as possible, be got rid of: you will therefore slip no opportunity to have a fling at it. As it is the basis of Christianity, we shall do no great good until it be destroyed.

Having thus prepared your congregation, you may now enter more circumstantially into the various opinions

* *Una ratio videtur, quicquid evenerit, ferre moderate, præsertim cum omnium rerum anors sit extremum.*

Ep. Fam.

opinions of the ancients concerning the nature of the human soul. Previously observing, that the nobility, priesthood, poets, and philosophers in the polite reign of Augustus, were almost universally Epicureans, you will proceed to inform the audience that Epicurus was very positive that the soul is composed of heat, vapour, air, and something else, for which he could find no name.^(a) That it is corporeal he proves by this unanswerable argument: it moves the body, and consequently must touch it: but nothing can touch matter that is not itself material; ergo, the soul must

~~be~~ ^N ~~be~~ ^{be}


be corporeal, and consequently mortal. Some of our modern Calvinistical philosophers are of the same opinion. Lucretius thought it a most comfortable doctrine, as it entirely relieved men's minds from the fear of punishment after death; and, for this reason it will doubtless be well received by all ranks of people: for, to confess the truth, though there is nothing pleasant in the idea of annihilation, yet it is certainly better than that of spending an eternity in company with the Devil in the midst of fire and brimstone.

Zeno

Zeno was of opinion, that the soul consisted entirely of fire; Plato, that it is composed of three parts, namely, reason in the head, anger in the heart, and cupidity below the girdle; Dicæarchus, that it was nothing at all; Aristoxenus, that it was an old song, or the tune of a fiddle, as we learn from Cicero: *animam esse censet ipsius corporis intentionem quandam, velut in cantu et fœlibus, quæ harmonia dicitur.* Your lordship will probably tell me that Macrobius ascribes this ingenious opinion to Pythagoras. Be that as it may, *tantas componere lit^e* is none of my business, nor your lord-

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ship's.

ship's. All you have to do is, to
 introduce the Epicurean creed in the
place of the Athanasian, and in this
attempt you will have the hearty
concurrence of the whole kingdom.

In all matters of national concern,
the city of London has always been
thought of considerable importance ;
it will therefore be necessary that
your subaltern preachers should take
some pains to instruct the mayor,
aldermen, and common council, in
the principles of Paganism, and
particularly in the Epicurean phi-
losophy, of which the pleasures of
the table make no inconsiderable
part.

part. It may not be amiss to inform them, that it was a constant custom among the Romans to take a vomit both before and after a feast; that they were thus enabled to eat much more without any danger of an apoplexy; and that even the great Julius Cæsar frequently indulged himself in this practice. Your lordship remembers his dining with Cicero in the country.

In speaking of the soul I forgot to remind your lordship, that many of the fathers, particularly Tertulian and St. Augustine, believed in the materiality of spirits: now

if spirits, that can, with so much facility, enter a room through the key-hole, and vanish through the floor without the help of a stage trap, are substantial beings, doubtless souls may be composed of the same stuff. Such venerable authority must necessarily have great weight with all good Christians. (a)

Whilst I was writing the last paragraph, my servant (I keep a servant) brought me a blue pamphlet, called the *English Review*, published by one Murray. I said to myself, "An *English Review* published by a Scotchman! that's improbable."

(a) Vid. your Priestley-ites.

probable." No matter. Casting my eye accidentally on the account of Dr. Reid's Essays, the following words caught my attention: "*For aught we know, this earth we inhabit may be an huge animal floating about in the blue expanse.*" I confess this hypothesis, thrown out as a conjecture, gave me great pleasure, as I could not help regarding it as a proof, that these giants of literature, these dictators in every branch of science, are gradually falling back into the ancient philosophy. Trismegistus, Pythagoras, Plato, and the Stoicks in general were of opinion that the world is an animal,

of which the heavens is the soul and the earth the body. The stars, if we may credit Plutarch, they believed to be the eyes of this huge animal. Your lordship doubtless recollects the following passage in Arnobius, *advers. Gentes*. “ *In philosophiæ memorabiles studio atque ad istius nominis columnen, vobis laudatoribus elevati, universam istam molem mundi, cujus omnibus amplexibus ambimur, tegimur ac sustinemur, animans esse unum, sapiens, rationale consultum, probabili asseveratione definiunt.* ” And indeed, *parvis componere magna*, a Christian bishop, in our own times, has furnished us with a powerful argument in support of
this

this opinion of the Stoicks. This reverend philosopher discovered, floating in the North Sea, an animal several miles in circumference.

Your lordship having preached as many sermons as will make a couple of Shandean volumes, you may give them (bishops never sell their works) to Tom Becket. Tom, though he does rub his hands and shrug his shoulders, is a very honest fellow. This Becket, my lord, was, for many years, the humble friend and servant of David Garrick ; ever attentive and obedient to his commands, to the great neglect

neglect of his own business. David never gave him sixpence.— Your sermons, when published, will be echoed by the inferior clergy to the *prophanum vulgus*, who will understand just enough to conceive that a change of religion is at hand; at which they will rejoice exceedingly: the desire of novelty is one of their strongest passions. The greater latitude allowed by Paganism will be no recommendation to the common people of England: they already take as much liberty as they like, and feel themselves not at all restrained by the precepts of Christianity: they are too much employed

employed to think of religion, except on a Sunday : at church they repeat their prayers like parrots, starlings, or magpies, and listen to sermons of which they do not understand a single sentence ; not for want of capacity, but because it is impossible for any clergyman, consistent with his reputation, to preach in the vernacular language of the multitude. He is confident that his discourses will be printed, if not during his life, certainly after his death, for the benefit of his widow ; he polishes them, therefore, not with a view to his congregation, but for the eye of learned

learned criticism, and, by this polish, renders them as unintelligible to the vulgar as Klopstock's *Messiah*, Young's *Night-thoughts*, or Akenfide's *Pleasures of Imagination*.

But, my lord, these attendants on divine worship constitute a very inconsiderable class of his Majesty's subjects. There is, in every part of the kingdom, particularly in the metropolis, a numerous order of ragged beings that never enter church or chapel of any denomination. Of these about a hundred annually make their exit at the gallows; about as many more are sent
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to travel for improvement, and ten times that number escape unpunished, every one of whom, at least ninety-nine out of a hundred, deserve to be hanged. Indeed the whole fraternity might be executed at once, without much fear of injustice, were not mobs necessary at elections, and other national occasions.

In the country, every man that has a Sunday-coat goes to church: those that have not one should be whipped out of the parish, to prevent disgrace; for they are sure to be hanged for sheep-stealing. Let
not

not this be mistaken for an argument in favour of Christianity: the observation is equally true of all peasants in all countries, and of all religions. In London the case is very different: there, every citizen that keeps a horse, a single-horse-chaise, or can afford to hire a coach, spends his Sunday either at his villa, or at an inn in the country. At the west end of the town, fine ladies and fine gentlemen universally spend the time of morning-service in bed; and you know, my Lord, nobody but tradesmen's servants ever go to church in an afternoon.

From

From these considerations it is evident, that preaching will be no very powerful agent in producing the intended revolution. But your lordship, in concert with your right reverend brethren, and with the assistance of deans and prebendaries, may do signal service to the cause, in your frequent conversations with people of quality. There are many arguments in favour of Paganism, which cannot fail to have great weight with persons in high life. After removing their apprehensions of a future state of retribution, on the authority of Epicurus, who taught that pleasure is the only rational

tional object of a human being, you will particularly insist on the excellence of that philosophy which teaches that suicide is a virtue.

This discovery were alone sufficient to command success: for what can be more delightful than to have suicide announced to be a virtue in a nation that could not be restrained from self-slaughter, even whilst it was believed to be the greatest crime?

This philosophy your lordship will necessarily enforce by the examples of Zeno, who hanged himself; Empedocles, who plunged into the flames of Etna; Clearchus, Crispus, Cato, and many other great

men

as source of the prof. suicide

men who most heroically killed themselves. Duelling also, though a species of resentment with which the heroes of antiquity, for want of a due sense of honour, were unacquainted, may be easily defended on the principles of the Stoicks, who taught that there was no greater crime in killing a man, than an ox, a cat, or any other animal.

These arguments, I presume, will be found sufficient for the conversion of the nobility and gentry in the higher walks of life. Among the clergy some may possibly object to the introduction of the reli-

O

gion

gion of the ancient Romans, because they have learnt from Ovid and Lucretius, that the priests of Cybele were eunuchs. I must confess too that St. Jerome and Tertullian, in *Apologetico*, confirm this story: nevertheless, as it is universally acknowledged that these priests castrated themselves in the furor of intoxication, there can be no danger in this country, where the clergy never drink to excess.

Possibly some of your dignified brethren may be apprehensive that, in exchanging Christianity for Paganism, they may lose in point of
wealth,


wealth, rank, or power. They are mistaken. The Roman priests, of every denomination, were of the first nobility. The augurs in particular were generally of consular rank; and so great was their power, that they could put an immediate stop to publick business, and dissolve the assemblies of the people whenever they pleased. As to their revenue, they wisely kept it secret; but, since poverty was no virtue in *their* religion, we may safely conclude they took sufficient care of themselves; especially as they were amenable to no tribunal. These pontifices were I think at first

only eight in number; to them Sylla added seven: now if his present Majesty will be graciously pleased to create eleven more, change the title, and for twenty-six Christian *episcopi*, we have at once twenty-six Pagan *pontifices*, without the least confusion or alteration on the bench. The title of archbishop seems to correspond well enough with that of *pontifex maximus*; but unluckily we happen to have two. What of that? I can see no reason why there may not be two *pontifices maximi*, as well as two kings of Brentford. In publick processions, their walking together, and
smelling

smelling at one nosegay, would have a pretty effect. It was the office of the *decemviri* at Romé to interpret the prophecies contained in the Sybeline volumes. This employment might be given to the deans, and our prebendaries might be easily metamorphosed into *bauruspices*, whose business it was to attend the sacrifices, and announce the omens to the people.

In speaking of Roman sacrifices, we are naturally led to compare the religion of these heathens to that of the Jews. Sacrifice, that most essential ceremony, was in both

the same. This consideration might possibly in time bring over that stiff-necked generation.

My lord, in a matter of such importance, I would not willingly leave a single objection unanswered. Your lordship may possibly imagine the diversity of religious opinions in this kingdom to be an insurmountable obstacle to the great design, as it will be impossible to unite so many discordant sects; but if your lordship will be pleased to  recollect that Protestants had rather worship Juno than the Virgin Mary; that a Quaker had rather turn
heathen

heathen than pull off his hat; that the Presbyterians^a have degraded the author of Christianity into a mere man, and that they had rather have no religion at all than suffer their teachers to wear a gown or surplice; that each sect has a greater contempt for the opinions of every other sect of Christians than for Paganism; when, I say, your lordship contemplates mankind in this point of view, your objection will immediately vanish.

~~With the Presbyterians you will~~
~~have very little trouble; they have~~
~~in fact given up the game; never-~~
~~theless,~~

~~the Presbyterians are the only~~

theless, as they are fond of religious controversy, they may possibly deny the consequence. In that case I would advice your lordship to adopt the Socratic method of disputation, thus :

Qu. Was Jesus Christ incarnate by the Holy Ghost ?

Ans. No.

Qu. Was he the son of the Virgin Mary ?

Ans. No: he was the son of Mary; he could not be the son of a virgin.

Qu. Who was his father ?

Ans. Joseph.

Qu.

Qu. Is it possible for a man to be the father of a child without having had carnal knowledge of his wife?

Ans. No.

Qu. Is it possible for a man to have carnal knowledge of a woman without his knowing it?

Ans. No.

Qu. Do you believe the New Testament?

Ans. Yes.

Qu. Are we not positively told that Joseph knew not his wife till after the birth of Christ; and that being a just man, and unwilling to make her a publick example, he
was

was minded to put her away privately?

Ans. ~~Yes.~~ (b)

Qu. Is not this a sufficient proof that he knew himself not to be the father of Jesus.

Ans. —————

Qu. You are silent. But if Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost, nor by Joseph, must not Mary have been unfaithful?

Ans. Yes.

Qu. What then was Mary?—
I must not hear your answer; and so Dr. P.^(a) I wish you a good night.

Thus you see, my lord, the Dissenters have got the start of us.

(a) vide p-182, (a) The
(b) they answer- No.

The greatest genius they ever produced ; a man whose abilities would have done honour to any community, hath, like the Jewish Hercules, so shook the main pillar of our Philistine temple, that the best thing we can do is to get out of it as fast as we can. This philosopher hath saved you a great deal of trouble with his own community: they would never have listened to the persuasions of a man in lawn sleeves. But, if peradventure there should yet remain a few individuals so obstinately attached to Christianity, as not to be convinced of their errors by the arguments already alledged,

your

your lordship may inform them, that one Bartholomæus Albici, an Italian monk, wrote a large folio book to prove that, compared with St. Francis, Christ was a mere bungler in the art of miracle-working, and that Francis was, in every other branch of saintship, much the greater man. All Franciscans are of the same opinion. In this they are not singular. Every other order of monks and nuns pay the same compliment to their respective patrons: so that, in Roman Catholic countries, Jesus is sunk so low in the scale of objects of adoration, (by the heathens called gods) that

that he is seldom addressed, except as a child in the arms, and for the sake of his beautiful mother.

Those who have never travelled must be exceedingly at a loss to account for the universal predilection of the Roman Catholics in favour of the blessed Virgin; but those gentlemen who have seen the *Madonas* of Raphael and Guido, will not be in the least surprised that the lovely nurse should attract the devotion of a monk, rather than the *bambino* in her arms, or than the shocking representation of Christ expiring on the cross, the most horrible

horrible picture that the bigotry of painting ever imagined. If the company should discredit your report concerning Bartholomæus's folio book, your lordship may offer to read it to them for their edification. They will probably acknowledge themselves convinced without giving you the trouble.

In your conversation with serious men, you will deduce the necessity of relinquishing Christianity from the consideration of its being so miserably sophistified, garbled, mangled, and torn, during an eighteen hundred years progress, as

hardly to have preserved a single constituent atom. By way of illustration, your lordship may relate the following true story:

An opulent burgomaster of Amsterdam, some years ago, gave a dinner to a select company of gentlemen; of which, in an ancient Dutch manuscript (which I shall leave with the publisher for the inspection of the incredulous) I find the following list: viz. *Signr. Petro Papa*, an Italian, who, from a key hanging to the flap of his pocket, was supposed to be a lord of the bed chamber to some prince. *Martinus*

tinus Lutherus, a German. *Joannes Calvinus*, a Frenchman born, but now a citizen of Geneva. Behind these illustrious guests stood Socinus, Molina, Jansenius, Pelagius, John Knox, Whitfield, a Moravian, and a Quaker. At the conclusion of the repast, one half of an excellent cheese was set upon the table; the upper surface of which cheese, as it now stood upon its convex edge, was as even as a sheet of ice. But, before we proceed in our story, it is necessary to observe, that nothing is so insupportable to a Dutchman, as to have his cheese dug into, like a Cheshire cheese in an English tavern.

tavern. His guests had no such ideas of deformity. Every man cut or dug according to his taste. But to the infinite astonishment of their masters, the servants who stood at their backs, now, pulling each a knife out of his pocket, assailed the poor cheese with such fury, and hacked and dug it so unmercifully, that the burgomaster, losing all patience, snatched it up and threw it out of the window.

This strange impertinent behaviour of the servants, your lordship will naturally suppose, produced great confusion. But Luther, a man

P of

of singular intrepidity, soon drove them out of the room. Bottles and glasses were now set upon the table. *Petro Papa*, being asked for a toast, gave *the mother of all saints*. Luther, to amuse the company, related a droll dialogue which he had with the devil whilst he sat at the little-house. Calvin told a comical story about one Servetus. They all got tipsy, and they parted in perfect good humour with each other.

I will now suppose your lordship to be already advanced within a step or two of the *ne plus ultra* of ecclesi-

ecclesiastical preferment; but, my lord, notwithstanding your present vicinity to the Land of Promise, unless you observe, most attentively, the line of conduct which I am now about to recommend, your view of Canaan will prove like that of Moses, a mere Pisgah prospect. Since your first admission into the House of Lords, you have most religiously supported every successive administration, whether whig, tory, or mongrel, to the utmost of your abilities; wisely considering, that it is not for right reverend divines to arraign the conduct of kings and ministers of state; that they

themselves are the best judges of the legality, illegality, justice, or injustice of their proceeding; that your time is so entirely occupied in studying the law of Moses as to leave you no leisure for the investigation of the law of nations; and that all you ought to know is that the ministry must be supported. On these principles, you have given frequent proofs of persuasive eloquence for war or peace, according to the temper of the times.^{a/} But, my lord, your present situation requires an immediate change of policy. I do not mean, that you should now vote and speak against

(a/ An: 1775.

the

the minister: no; but I advise you to be quite silent. State policy requires that the archbishop of Canterbury's politicks should be comprised in these two words *passive obedience*; and that in matters of state he should never obtrude his opinion on the privy - council. This expectation is founded on the most substantial reasoning. The metropolitan of all England, with the constitutional powers inseparable from his high office, at the head of a numerous clergy, if he were politically inclined, might become very troublesome to government. Hence your lordship perceives the

P 3 necessity

necessity of assuming the character of an unconcerned spectator, the moment you aspire to the see of Canterbury.

When the order of bishops was first instituted in this kingdom, you know, my lord, the clergy were not allowed to marry. Hence it comes to pass, that the wives of their lordships have no rank or title. Since therefore the husband confers no honour on his wife, it is but equitable to conclude that she can reflect neither honour nor dishonour on his lordship. So that during her winter residence in town, she hath
full

full liberty to open her house, as often as she thinks proper, to every male and female gambler in London. She may give concerts of musick on Sunday evenings, and may receive masks in their way to the Pantheon, without the least reflexion on her husband's sanctity of manners. He, honest gentleman, is long since retired to rest. As to horns, they are quite out of the question: the innocence of the present times precludes every suspicion of that nature.

CHAPTER VII.

ADVICE TO AN ARCHBISHOP.

PERMIT me to congratulate your grace on your late translation to the see of Canterbury. I have now fulfilled my promise. I have seated you on the pinnacle of ecclesiastical eminence. It is true you do not, like your early predecessors, enjoy the privilege of coining money, or of knighting your friends; but you have the immense satisfaction of being the first peer; of taking rank of every duke in the kingdom, except those of the royal family. You are not,
it

it is true, like Wolsey, a prime minister; nor are you like him ever tottering on the brink of a precipice. You are perfectly secure in your political insignificance, and those, who are but superficially acquainted with human nature, will suppose that you have attained the highest degree of sublunary felicity. Happiness consists principally in expectation and desire; but expectation and desire are absorbed in fruition. Perfect gratification seldom fails to produce a langour, a *tedium*, still better expressed in French by the word *ennui*, which is often less supportable than absolute poverty.

A short

A short residence at Lambeth will convince your lordship that I possess some little knowledge of human nature; but your chief uneasiness will arise from recollecting that you are debarred, by the fundamental precepts of Christianity, from enjoying the good things with which you are now so abundantly provided. You have prayed every day of your life, frequently five or six times a-day, that you might not *be led into temptation*; and you have not less frequently prayed, mentally, for that preferment which necessarily collects, accumulates, and augments temptations in proportion to
its

its progress. Who would profess a religion that can reconcile such contradictions? Who would wish for preferment in a religion, which in bestowing wealth forbids the use of it? Who would accept of honours in a religion that positively commands humility? or who would desire riches and power, where submission and poverty are so invariably recommended?

Let me now request that your grace will turn your eyes from this disagreeable picture, to the delightful prospect of ancient Paganism. When this religion shall be
once

once introduced, with what innocent rapture will an Epicurean divine survey a delicious turtle, a fat haunch of venison, a *magnum bonum* of claret, or a flowing bowl of arrack punch! With what pleasure will he reflect, that in eating and spewing luxuriously *, he is fulfil-

* When, in a former page, I recommended to the corporation of London the Roman custom of vomiting before and after a feast, I had not the least design to exclude the clergy from the benefit of so admirable an invention, which some commentators ascribe to Speusippus, the nephew and successor of Plato. What renders this conjecture probable, is, that Speusippus so ruined his constitution by indulging his appetite
for

fulfilling the commands of the founder of his sect, and that every glass he drinks is a devout libation to the god Bacchus. An ample turbot, or a cod's head with oysters, becomes a sacrifice to Neptune. He distrains for tythes in honour of Ceres, and in visiting Mother Cole he celebrates the mysteries of the Paphean goddess.

Hence it is very evident, that by the introduction of Paganism, conscience, for pleasure, that Diogenes reproached him with cowardice for suffering life with so diseased a body. He took the hint and hung himself most philosophically. This we learn from *Diogen. Laertius. Vit. Phil.*

science, that troublesome appendage to Christianity, would be totally annihilated; a consideration which, one would imagine, were alone sufficient to convince every Christian of his error: if, nevertheless, your grace should find any difficulty in converting the king's ministers, you may easily convince them, from the example of the Romans, that Pagan superstition was a much better engine of state than Christianity. For this truth I refer your grace to Cicero, who, though he was himself an Academic, constantly recommended the worship of the Heathen gods and the scrupulous obser-

observance of all the vulgar ceremonies of religion, because the popular belief in divination was necessary to the support of government. Polybius highly commends the policy of the Romans in thus availing themselves of vulgar superstition, and blames those philosophers, who, in his time, were endeavouring to open the eyes of the people.

The Sybeline volumes in the hands of the decemviri were certainly much better instruments of state than the Jewish prophets, or even than the Revelations of St. John;

John; although I must acknowledge, that these sacred writings will prophesy any thing the state may require; and I allow the present administration employing a Cornish divine to prove that the king of France is the *horned beast*, to be an excellent political *manœuvre*, inasmuch as it may make the Dutch and the Americans ashamed of their great ally: for, though *Cæsar and Pompey were both of them horned*, yet mankind in general, howsoever unjustly, look with contempt upon a cuckold.

The

The Delphic oracle was of singular political utility to the Greeks and Romans. A similar establishment in this kingdom would be equally serviceable to our ministry: and indeed your grace will acknowledge the propriety of re-establishing the Tripod^{a/} on the ruins of Christianity, when you recollect, on the authority of Diodorus, Strabo, and Pausanias, that, at the birth of Christ, Apollo became silent. Augustus having sent to enquire the reason why the oracle was dumb, was answered thus:—

(a) *alias. Horley's Tripod, probably* ^{Me}

*Me puer Hebræus, dives deus ipse gubernans,
Cedere sede jubet, tristemque redire sub orcum;
Aris ergo dehinc tacitis absedito nostris.*

In what part of this kingdom to fix the oracle is a question of some importance. You[^] grace will doubtless consider it with the attention it deserves. In my humble opinion, *Gotham* should be the place. I am influenced in this opinion, perhaps a little superstitiously, by the circumstance which first led to the discovery of the oracle at Delphos. We learn from Diodorus Siculus, that a *goat-herd*, driving his flock near the spot where the temple of Apollo was afterwards built, perceived that,

as

as often as they approached a certain cave, they became remarkably vociferous. His natural curiosity prompted him to examine the place; but he was no sooner within the influence of the exhalation that issued from the chasm, than he found himself inspired with the spirit of prophecy. Now, that a herd of goats should discover the den of Apollo will not seem at all incredible, when we recollect, that the miraculous powers of the Bath waters were discovered by a herd of swine, a species of animals never suspected of superior sagacity. Indeed the philosophical transactions

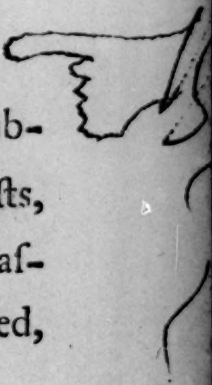
of the *learned pig* seem to contradict this general opinion; but that animal is so singular a phenomenon, that as Voltaire, with less reason, called the last age, *le siècle de Louis XIV.* future historians will distinguish the present by *le siècle du cochon savant.*

May it please your grace: I now approach the final period of my admonition. The arguments I have used have doubtless convinced you of the necessity of the total subversion of Christianity; but, my lord, there remains yet a formidable obstacle to our project, which, I fear,

I fear, it will be very difficult to remove. I mean the conversion of the king. Unfortunately, he is a determined Christian; and unless you can convince him of his error, and prove, beyond a doubt, that the change of religion will be for the good of his subjects, you will never obtain his *fiat*. Suppose you were to try the effect of the following petition.

May it please your Majesty !

We your Majesty's faithful subjects, the archbishops, bishops, priests, and deacons, in convocation assembled,



sembled, fully convinced of your Majesty's paternal benevolence, humbly implore, that you will be graciously pleased to relieve us from the intolerable burthen of the Christian religion, and that we may be permitted to establish the religion of the ancient Greeks and Romans, for the following substantial reasons, viz.

First : Because the Christian religion prohibits the full enjoyment of the riches with which it hath pleased your Majesty to endow us.

Secondly : Because it is impossible, in coaches and palaces to imitate

tate the lives of indigent apostles.

Thirdly : Because our lives and our consciences are perpetually at war with each other, entirely owing to our belief of Christianity.

Fourthly : Because our lives and our doctrines so flagrantly contradict each other, that we are become a laughing-stock unto the people.

Fifthly : Because we humbly conceive that the passions of the clergy, like those of other men, were given them for the noble purpose of indulgence, according

to the rational creed of the Epicureans.

Sixthly : Because our congregations now consist entirely of charity-children and old women.

Seventhly : Because the fear of hell-flames preserves no villain from the gallows.

Eighthly : Because, after eighteen hundred years trial, mankind are just as profligate and wicked as ever.

Ninthly : Because many of your Majesty's rich subjects are become so bigotted to foreign cookery, as, like the ancient Ægyptians, to worship the gods Garlick and Onions. .

Tenthly: Because the devotees to pleasure are all become Pythagoreans, in expectation of transmigrating into the bodies of bulls, rams, boars, or stallions.

Eleven: Because the following most respectable and most numerous classes of people, viz. lawyers, solicitors, attorneys, physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, gamblers and prostitutes, profess no religion at all.

Twelve: Because, when, on solemn days, the chaplain is ordered to preach before your Majesty's House of Commons, not more than one or two members can be

R . . . found

found to attend the speaker; that honourable house therefore professes no religion: and sorry we are to say, that among the peers also, the profession of religion is confined to our own bench.

Lastly: Because, after mature reflexion, consideration, and deliberation, we have unanimously resolved, that it is safer and better for ourselves, and for every other class of your Majesty's liege subjects, to finish our existence with the present life, according to the Epicurean system, than to stand a trial before the God of the Christians.

For

For these and many other reasons of equal weight and importance, we humbly beseech your Majesty that Christianity may be abolished, and that we may re-establish the religion of the heathens, whose mythology we have studied from ^(a) our early youth, and whose tenets are better adapted to the present state of human nature.

And, forasmuch as it hath pleased God, after the ineffectual deliberations of synods and councils for many centuries, and the massacre of millions of unbelievers, to suffer old women and young children in the present generation to discover,

(a) see Gr. Douc. Diff. & that 1785.

that BELIEF is involuntary, and that every man's creed is written upon his heart, without his consent; it is our last and most earnest request, that all written *creeds* and *confessions of faith* may be totally excluded from the religion about to be established; and your Majesty's humble petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray,

Signed for, and at the desire of,
all the rest.

10 H. 53

CANT.

Probably by the same Satyrisk ~~FINIS~~. see Gent. Magaz: 1787, p-944, 1066, 2^d. 1788, p-25, 117, 286, 389, 490-1, *Liberty in Education*